

#### Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended) A locking connector for electrically connecting segments of electrical conductors, comprising:

a housing for receiving a core of a first electrical conductor;

a coupler for connecting to a second electrical conductor mounted in a substantially co-axial engagement with the housing;

a means mounted in the housing and in the coupler for establishing an electrical connection between the first and the second electrical conductors, to which said housing and said coupler are connected; and

a locking ~~assembly~~ means mounted between the housing and the coupler for locking the housing ~~in relation~~ to the coupler and disengaging the housing from a locked engagement with the coupler by axially moving the housing toward the coupler.

Claim 2 (currently amended) The device of Claim 1, wherein said housing encloses at least one insulated insert adapted for engaging said core of the first electrical conductor.

Claims 3 – 12 (cancelled).

Claim 13 (currently amended) The device of Claim 1, wherein said housing comprises means for connecting the housing to the first electrical conductor.

Claim 14 (original) The device of Claim 13, wherein said means for connecting the housing to the first electrical conductor comprises threads formed on an exterior end portion of said housing.

Claim 15 (original) The device of Claim 13, wherein said means for connecting the housing to the first electrical conductor comprises circumferential projections formed on an exterior end portion of said housing.

Claims 16 – 21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (new) The device of Claim 1, wherein said means for establishing an electrical connection comprises a coaxial cable insert mounted in a central opening of each of said housing and said coupler.

Claim 23 (new) A locking connector for electrically connecting segments of electrical conductors, comprising:

- a housing for receiving a core of a first electrical conductor;
- a coupler for connecting to a second electrical conductor mounted in a substantially co-axial engagement with the housing;
- a means mounted in the housing and in the coupler for establishing an electrical connection between the first and the second electrical conductors, to which said housing and said coupler are connected; and
- a locking means mounted between the housing and the coupler for locking the housing ~~in~~ to the coupler and disengaging the housing from a locked engagement with the coupler by axially moving the housing toward the coupler, said locking means comprising a retainer means for retaining locking members mounted between the housing and the coupler, a compression spring mounted between the retainer means and the housing, a plurality of locking members movable between a resting position in cutouts formed in the retainer means and an annular groove formed in the housing when the compression spring is compressed to thereby allow the housing to slide into engagement with an inner wall of the retainer means.

Claim 24 (new) The device of Claim 23, wherein said means for establishing an electrical connection comprises a coaxial cable insert mounted in a central opening of each of said housing and said coupler.

Claim 25 (new) The device of Claim 24, wherein each of said coaxial cable inserts is mounted in an independent insulating enclosure.

Claim 26 (new) The device of Claim 25, wherein the coaxial cable insert mounted in the housing comprises at least one gripping projection that is adapted to fit between the core of the first electrical conductor and the insulating enclosure to thereby force an insulating covering of the first electrical conductor between said at least one gripping projection and an interior wall of the housing.

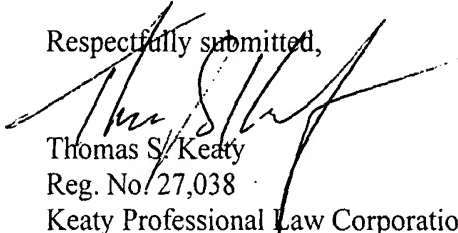
Claim 27 (new) The device of Claim 26, wherein an inner wall of said housing is provided with an annular shoulder, and wherein said coaxial cable insert mounted in the housing is provided with a peripheral flange, said annular shoulder engaging said peripheral flange, thereby preventing removal of the coaxial cable insert from the housing.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class mail in an envelope addressed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Debra Horn 7/18/03  
Debra Horn Date

Respectfully submitted,

  
Thomas S. Keaty  
Reg. No. 27,038  
Keaty Professional Law Corporation  
2140 World Trade Center  
2 Canal Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130  
(504) 524-2100  
Attorney for Applicant